



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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EMS TRANSMISSION 4/17/07  
Instruction Memorandum No. NV-2007-027  
Expires: 9/30/2008

To: BLM Employees, Nevada  
Attention: Volunteers

From: State Director, Nevada

Subject: Volunteer Agreements

**Program Area:** Volunteers

**Purpose:** To provide guidance to BLM Nevada employees on the requirements to fully execute volunteer agreements. All volunteer agreements—whether individual or group—must be signed by the volunteer, or a group representative, and the BLM signing official before the agreement is valid. All volunteer agreements must have current effective dates. Failure to have a fully executed agreement increases BLM's vulnerability to lawsuits in the event of on-the-job injury or property loss on the part of the volunteer.

**Policy/Action:** BLM Manual 1114 - Volunteers. This policy defines authorities starting at the Director level to the field office volunteer coordinator. The policy is clear as to each person's role when recruiting volunteers to help BLM accomplish its mission.

The BLM Manual 1203 - Delegation of Authority contains an amendment for Nevada (Rel. NV-1-185) which delegates authority to Assistant Field Managers, Field Station Managers, National Conservation Area and National Landscape Conservation System managers. In the Nevada State Office, this delegation is assigned to the Chief, Office of Communications, Deputy State Directors for Minerals, Resources, Lands and Planning, Fire and Aviation, and Support Services.

Before any volunteer starts an assignment for BLM, a volunteer agreement must be signed by all parties, including the appropriate BLM official. If a volunteer is injured or dies while working for the BLM without a fully executed volunteer agreement, the Office of Worker's Compensation Programs (OWCP) would deny the claim because there is no documentation to prove the individual was authorized to perform work for BLM. The only other recourse would be for the injured person to seek restitution against BLM in civil court. Anyone has the right to file an OWCP or Tort Claim against the BLM. The decision regarding the validity of the claim is made by OWCP or the Solicitor's Office (for Tort).

BLM Manual 1114- Volunteers .07B, provides guidance on the proper handling of volunteer agreements to meet the requirements of the Privacy Act. "Volunteer files are considered to be confidential and must be filed in a locked file cabinet with a Privacy Act Notification (Bureau sign S-137) affixed to the file or cabinets." Additionally, confidentiality blue envelopes must be used when mailing volunteer agreements through inter-agency mail.

Incomplete volunteer agreements will invalidate any volunteer hours accrued in performance of the agreement. A volunteer agreement is valid until the end of the current fiscal year, September 30. All volunteer agreements must be closed out, renewed or revised at the beginning of the fiscal year, October 1. All volunteer agreements must be assigned a new number at the beginning of the fiscal year or when the agreement is signed. The BLM Nevada State Office Volunteer Coordinator, Debra Kolkman at (775) 289-1946, is available for assistance.

Signed by:  
Ron Wenker  
State Director, Nevada

Authenticated by:  
Nancy Thompson  
Secretary